

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REPORT
2012 Drought Response Task Force
July 24, 2012

Illinois Weather and Crop Conditions

Please refer to attached report.

Aflatoxins in Corn

Aflatoxins are a group of chemicals produced by certain mold fungi. Although aflatoxins are not automatically produced whenever grain becomes moldy, the risk of aflatoxin contamination is greater with damaged, moldy corn than corn that contains little mold. Aflatoxins are harmful or fatal to livestock at certain levels and are considered carcinogenic to humans and animals. In the Midwest, aflatoxin levels are highest during hot, dry summers. The Department has sent a survey out to all warehouse licensees (approximately 280 grain elevator operators) to determine how they intend on handling aflatoxin contaminated grain. Surveys are starting to trickle in and the results of that survey will be shared with the Drought Response Task Force.

Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Annual Conference

Director Flider addressed attendees at the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts annual conference and in part, provided a report on Illinois' response to the drought, including the activities of the Governor's Drought Response Task Force.

Interagency Coordination

The Department continues to closely coordinate with USDA Farm Service Agency on the Secretarial Disaster Designation, Conservation Reserve Program Emergency Haying and Grazing and other USDA emergency programs. All updates have been uploaded to drought.illinois.gov. In addition, information regarding IDOT's Hay Permitting Program have been placed on the website.

Illinois Hay Directory

The Department also offers a Hay and Straw Directory to help producers locate hay if their pastures have been badly damaged by drought and they have no hay on hand for feeding livestock. Access to the directory is furnished through the Department's website at www.agr.state.il.us. If producers do not have access to the Internet, they can contact the Bureau of Markets and Promotion at 217/782-4925 for assistance. Use of the hay directory is free of charge.